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ABSTRACT

An effective volunteer program can provide a means for facilitating individualized reading instruction in an elementary school setting by providing services to meet the needs of both teachers and students. Volunteers in the Prince George's County Public Schools in Columbia, Maryland provide services in three major areas. Clerical volunteers develop instructional materials and aid in the checking of student work. Instructional volunteers reinforce teacher-initiated instruction and assist in clubs and special activities. Tutorial volunteers work outside the classroom in small group instruction of specific skills. Personnel are recruited from the community, and placement of clerical and instructional volunteers is coordinated by a volunteer liaison. Recruitment of tutorial volunteers is accomplished by the reading teacher, and this group is exposed to training in evaluation and record-keeping. Volunteers are encouraged to participate in inservice meetings to discuss new materials, teaching and behavioral techniques, and problems. Yearly evaluation forms completed by volunteers are utilized in program modification. A sample recruitment letter, volunteer information sheet, pupil referral, and tutorial evaluation form are included. (KS)

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# IMPLEMENTING VOLUNTEER SERVICES

# WITHIN A SCHOOL

Convention Session: Effective Use of Volunteers: County Organization and Individual School Program
May 13, 1976
2:00 - 4:45 pm
Royal Inn -- Monopoly A

CS 002 634

IMPLEMENTING VOLUNTEER SERVICES
WITHIN A SCHOOL

Current emphasis on individualizing instruction to meet the needs of each student has created a demand for hiring additional resources within schools. The current economic situation, however, has resulted in the reduction of resources in many schools. The problem of the simultaneous increase in responsibility and decrease in services has rendered insufficient time for individualizing student instruction. A well organized school volunteer program can be an effective means of ameliorating the situation for both teachers and students. The following is a description of an organizational procedure which has facilitated the implementation of volunteer services in an elementary school.

Three Types of Volunteers

Volunteers provide services in three major areas: clerical, instructional, and tutorial. Clerical volunteers are responsible for a variety of activities such as making instructional materials, assisting the checking of students' written work, typing teacher-made activities, and gathering materials of instruction. Instructional volunteers work in general ways to reinforce instruction initiated by the teacher. Such a volunteer is enlisted to assist children who are working independently during language arts or mathematics, while the teacher is instructing other students. In addition, instructional volunteers with particular areas of expertise help with clubs and activities in art, science, or social studies. Thus, the instructional volunteer is

generally helping a large number of children in the classroom while the teacher is present. Since both clerical and instructional volunteers work closely with the classroom teacher, they usually do not require training in methodology or record keeping procedures.

Tutorial volunteers provide small groups or individual children with reinforcement in specific skill areas. They meet with pupils on a regularly scheduled basis, usually outside of the classroom. Since specific academic skills are emphasized and contact with the classroom teacher is minimized, tutorial volunteers do require training in methodology and record keeping. Procedures for facilitating such training will be described subsequently.

Coordination of Volunteers

The use of volunteer services requires the coordination of teacher, student, and volunteer needs and is best administered by a professional staff member within the school. Since an important aspect of the reading teacher's role is to provide resources to classroom teachers for individualizing instruction, the administration of volunteer services is logically incorporated in this role. The overall coordination of volunteer services is shared by the reading teacher and a volunteer liaison, an enthusiastic volunteer who is eager to become familiar with the administrative procedures of recruitment, training and placement. The liaison coordinates services of clerical and instructional volunteers, while the reading teacher is responsible for the services of tutorial volunteers.

Recruitment and Orientation of Volunteers

The recruitment of volunteers may be a slow process, but this

should not be a deterrence. A recruitment letter which briefly describes the program and the various ways volunteers work in the school is sent home to all parents. Those interested respond by selecting their job preferences from the various categories listed, indicating convenient schedules, and subsequently attending an orientation meeting. Additional solicitations in the form of bulletins and opportunities at PTA meetings usually result in the attendance of numerous prospective volunteers at the orientation meeting. The agenda of this initial meeting includes various means of introducing the program. A general explanation of volunteer services is given by the reading teacher and former volunteers. A videotape recording of volunteers in action is then shown to quell apprehension and diminish the mystique regarding the role of volunteers. In addition, the responsibilities of each of the three types of volunteers are delineated in small groups. Emphasis is placed on the need for donating a greater amount of time on a regular basis for those desiring to become tutorial volunteers. At the close of the meeting, participants complete an information sheet indicating final job and schedule preferences.

Placement of Volunteers

Teachers are given a copy of the recruitment letter in order to specify the type of volunteer services they need and the schedules they prefer. The placement of clerical and instructional volunteers is coordinated by the volunteer liaison, who matches teacher and volunteer requests and handles the necessary communication.

Services of the tutorial volunteers are coordinated by the reading teacher. Classroom teachers complete a referral form for those students

needing supplemental help. The following information is requested: pupil's name, subject area of need, specific skill needs, additional pertinent information, and schedule preference including day and time. The reading teacher uses these referrals to make individual diagnoses based on a combination of observation, diagnostic teaching, results from informal tests, and scores on standardized tests. Small groups based on skill needs are then formed, and the aid of tutorial volunteers is enlisted to reinforce skills, as well as to cultivate interests and improve self concepts.

Training of Tutorial Volunteers

Tutorial volunteers attend a second school meeting during which record keeping, placement, and training procedures are explained. Records are kept in an instructional folder, prepared for each group to be tutored. Each folder contains a fact sheet and several session information sheets. The fact sheet includes pertinent information which has been completed by the reading teacher and the classroom teacher: name of volunteer, schedules, skill needs, and techniques and materials to be used. The session information chart is a brief description written by the volunteer at the end of each tutoring period, including: procedure and materials, pupils' reactions, evaluation of procedure and materials, and suggestions for further instruction. This chart is one of the most important aspects of record keeping, as it serves as a direct line of communication between the volunteer, classroom teacher and reading teacher. The use of the instructional folder is explained using folders from past years.

Placement of tutorial volunteers with pupils is made according to

subject, age, and schedule preferences of the volunteer. Individual training in the form of introductory sessions is scheduled with each volunteer. These sessions have several important purposes, the first of which is to inform the volunteer about the needs of pupils by discussing the completed fact sheet. Secondly, by observing the introductory lesson, prepared and demonstrated by the reading teacher, the volunteer becomes acquainted with the students and the use of the techniques and materials suggested on the fact sheet. At the close of the lesson, the volunteer participates by reading a story to the children. Finally, the lesson is discussed and the session information chart is completed. Similar lessons are planned until the volunteer feels comfortable working alone with the pupils. Such lessons may be planned periodically throughout the year as dictated by the changing needs of the students.

The instructional folder reflects educational needs and functions as an important record of progress attained throughout the year. The fact sheet serves as a guide for individualizing instruction based on diagnoses of students' strengths and weaknesses. It is available for use during parent conferences and is a means by which the effectiveness of the techniques and materials under use can be measured. The reading teacher reviews each folder weekly and writes suggestions regarding methods and materials directly on the session information chart. The classroom teacher is also encouraged to note behavioral, attitudinal and other changes observed in the classroom on the chart. Those pupils who experience difficulty in the small group or individual tutoring sessions are observed by the reading teacher during both classroom and tutorial instruction. Modifications of techniques or additional

evaluation by ancillary personnel may be indicated. The positive comments written about the progress of students are of great importance as they convey praise to the volunteer.

Coordinating Changes

Schedules for both clerical and instructional volunteers are kept by the reading teacher and volunteer liaison so that inquiries and new requests can be handled efficiently. The name, phone number, schedules, job description, and teacher's name are charted for each volunteer. Additional information including the names of pupils receiving tutoring and the specific academic areas are charted for tutorial volunteers. Such charts facilitate the changes inevitably needed throughout the year.

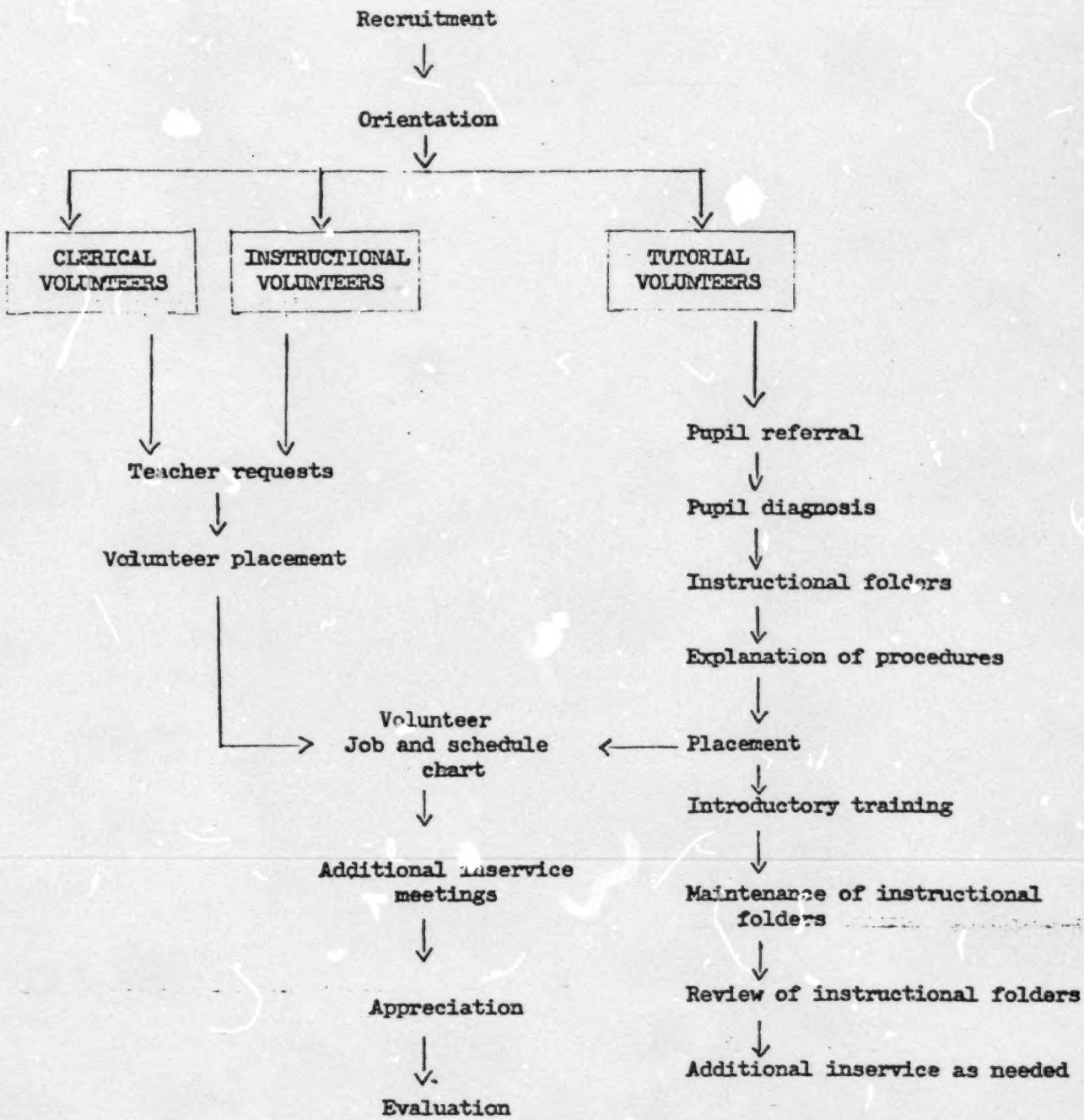
Changes precipitate the need for volunteer inservice meetings, during which volunteers are encouraged to discuss common problems, observe demonstrations and share experiences. Occasionally, problems in schedules occur when volunteers are uninformed about field trips or special activities. Classroom teachers are urged to keep volunteers abreast of such changes. Inservice meetings give volunteers the opportunity to view new materials for reinforcing skills and to learn to use audio-visual hardware and software. In addition, effective techniques for decreasing negative, attention-seeking behaviors, building self concepts, and fostering postive peer relationships of pupils are discussed. During such discussions it becomes apparent that volunteers have gained new insights into the problems and pleasure of education. Thus, school meetings are important for building a cohesive spirit among volunteers.

Appreciation and Evaluation

The appreciation of volunteers is shown in many ways throughout the year, both informally and formally. Children and teachers greet volunteers by name, creating a warm, accepting atmosphere, and photographs of volunteers at work are displayed in the halls of the school. A formal meeting is scheduled at the end of the year to honor the volunteers. Refreshments, prepared by teachers and students, are served, and teachers are in attendance as volunteers receive certificates of appreciation. End-of-year activities also include an evaluation of the program by volunteers. The evaluation sheet requires that each volunteer rate training sessions, materials, working facilities and communication procedures. The results are compiled so that the information can be used to build a more successful program for the coming year.

An effective volunteer program not only promotes a closer relationship between the community and the school; it also provides a means for facilitating individualized instruction by rendering services to meet the needs of both teachers and students.

Implementing Volunteer Services within a School



SAMPLE FORMS

FOR IMPLEMENTING VOLUNTEER SERVICES

WITHIN A SCHOOL

SAMPLE RECRUITMENT LETTER

WE NEED YOU AS A VOLUNTEER

Last year our volunteer program was a big success. We are going to try for a bigger and better program this school year. Even if you can give only thirty minutes a week, we want you as a volunteer. Please look over the list below and mark the areas in which you are interested. If you have any questions, please call our parent volunteer coordinator.

I would like to help in the following area(s):

_____ Clerical work at school
_____ Telephoning A.M. only
_____ Typing at home
_____ Making learning center and/or games
_____ Trade around babysitting
_____ Academic work with teacher, grade_____
_____ Art program
_____ Science program
_____ Small group work or individual tutoring
_____ Assist librarian

Please suggest other areas in which you would be interest in helping.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TOMORROW.

Name_____ Phone Number_____

Child's Name_____ Teacher_____

_____I would like to volunteer. Day(s)_____Time_____

_____I would like more information.

_____I cannot volunteer at this time.

ORIENTATION MEETING

There will be an orientation meeting to explain all of the aspects of the volunteer program in the school library on_____.

_____ Can attend _____ Cannot attend

# TUTORIAL VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SHEET

1. Name

2. Address

3. Phone number

4. Days and times preferred (please check)

| | am | pm |
|---|---|---|
| Mon. | _____ | _____ |
| Tues. | _____ | _____ |
| Wed. | _____ | _____ |
| Thurs. | _____ | _____ |
| Fri. | _____ | _____ |

5. Tutoring preferences (please check)

_____ Language Development

_____ Reading

_____ Spelling

_____ Handwriting

_____ Math

_____ Special interest group

6. Age preference

_____ Primary

_____ Intermediate

7. Would prefer to work

_____ One-to-one with a child

_____ With a small group

To be filled out by prospective tutorial volunteers.

PUPIL REFERRAL FOR VOLUNTEER TUTORING

| Pupil's Name | Subject Area of Need | Specific Skill Needs | Other Pertinent Information | Schedule Preference Day(s) | Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |

Teacher_____

To be filled out by the classroom teacher.

FACT SHEET FOR INSTRUCTIONAL FOLDER

Name(s) of Child(ren)

Volunteer _____

Day(s) and Time(s) _____

Teacher(s) _____ Room #____

Skill Needs

Materials and Techniques

To be filled out by Teacher and Coordinator.

SESSION INFORMATION SHEET FOR INSTRUCTIONAL FOLDER

| Procedure | Child's Reaction | Evaluation | Further Instruction |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |



To be kept in an Instructional Folder.
To be filled out by tutorial volunteer after each instructional session.

VOLUNTEER JOB AND SCHEDULE CHART

| NAME OF VOLUNTEER | PHONE | JOB DESCRIPTION | DAYS AND TIME | TEACHER | TUTEES | SKILL AREA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | | |



To be filled out by school volunteer coordinator.

EVALUATION

Training and In-Service Meetings

| | Very Helpful | Somewhat Helpful | Not Very Helpful |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The initial training sessions provided by the school were: | | | |
| 2. The training session where you and the child were introduced was: | | | |
| 3. The demonstrations of techniques and materials were: | | | |
| 4. The in-service meetings at school were: | | | |

5. What further training would be helpful? _____

_____

Materials

| | Sufficient | Insufficient |
|---|---|---|
| 1. The quantity of materials provided was: | | |
| 2. The variety of materials provided to meet skill needs was: | | |

3. What materials did you find most helpful? _____

_____

4. What additional materials would be helpful? _____

_____

Facilities

1. Facilities at school were: adequate inadequate

2. How could they be improved? _____

Communications

| | Adequate | Inadequate |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Communications between the volunteer and the reading resource teacher were: | | |
| 2. Communications between the volunteer and the classroom teacher were: | | |

3. How could communications be improved? _____

_____

To be filled out by the volunteer at the end of the school year.

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